



Rural Development

PA AN No. 1284 (2051-F)

February 14, 2014

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TO: All Employees
Rural Development, Pennsylvania

SUBJECT: Hours of Duty – Pennsylvania Rural Development (RD)

PURPOSE/INTENDED OUTCOME:

This Administrative Notice (AN) is issued to bring the requirements of RD Instruction 2051-F to all employee's attention and implement Pennsylvania's Hours of Duty policy. Recent VERA/VSIP, normal retirements, staff reductions, and other updates to Pennsylvania's organizational structure have caused a major change in the statewide staff's knowledge skills and abilities in all RD program areas. It is imperative our most senior staff is available to mentor and coach the newest RD staff members on routine and challenging program and administrative matters. Additionally, it is important that RD staff be available during similar business hours of our external customers (bankers, non-profit organizations, businesses, realtors, etc.).

COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS AN(s):

No previous ANs have been issued.

IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITIES:

RD Instruction 2051-F, reissued on June 28, 2010, established a Family-Friendly Workplace authorizing Alternative Work Schedules (AWS) which enable Pennsylvania RD to meet its mission needs while allowing employees' sufficient flexibility to meet both work and family needs. Program Directors, Team Leaders, and Supervisors are expected to counsel subordinate staff and answer their questions about this instruction.

USDA RD Area Offices and State Office Program Divisions in Pennsylvania are open for business Monday – Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM, excluding federal holidays. **It is expected that all Area Offices and Program Divisions are available to serve USDA external and internal customers in person, on the telephone, and via email during the official office hours.** Limited exceptions to this policy may be granted by the State Director. Emergency requests (employee sick or other unexpected event) shall be relayed to the State Director by the Team Leader or Program Director or designee as soon as possible after the incident occurs.

EXPIRATION DATE:
February 28, 2015

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Preceding RD Instruction 2051-F

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (PDF), found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

Team Leaders are responsible for ensuring adequate office coverage for Area Offices and Program Directors are responsible for ensuring adequate office coverage for State Office Program Divisions. Adequate office coverage means that at least one person permanently assigned to the Area Office or State Office Program division is available from 8 AM to 4:30 PM to assist internal and external customers. For State Program Divisions, either the Program Director or an Acting Program Director will be available to make decisions each work day.

Team Leaders and Program Directors will determine whether conditions such as office coverage restrict AWS participation. When an employee's request for AWS cannot be honored and a mutually acceptable alternative cannot be reached between the parties involved, the State Director will meet with all parties and determine a resolution that meets the needs of the Agency.

The various alternative work schedules as outlined in RD Instruction 2051-F, 2051.253 allow employees to determine their own work schedule within the limits set forth by the Agency. All employees are encouraged to read RD Instruction 2051-F to educate themselves on the various work schedules available to them and the regulations governing each schedule. Acceptable work schedules include:

- **“Flexible Work Schedule”** which consists of workdays composed of core hours and flexible hours. There are three types of flexible work schedules:
 - **Maxiflex Schedule** - Maxiflex schedules as outlined in RD 2051-F are authorized as long as no undue hardship is placed on any staff member to keep an office open due to another staff member's maxiflex schedule. The minimum number of hours that can be scheduled in a day is 5.5 and the most is 10. **Current 4/10 hour day schedules for GS-12 and below staff will be honored until changed by the employee. Future requests for 4/10 hour day schedules (for GS-11 and below) will be reviewed by the State Director before approval by the employee's supervisor. Program Directors and other GS-13 staff are not authorized 4/10 hour day work schedules. Future GS-12 Specialists and Team Leaders will not be authorized 4/10 work schedules.** Employees must request leave if they have not arrived within 30 minutes of their anticipated arrival time. Program Directors and Team Leaders are expected to resolve any schedule conflicts at the lowest level. Unresolved conflicts shall be immediately presented to the State Director.
 - **Flexitour schedule** – is a standard 8 hours/day 5 days per week with fixed start and stop times.
 - **Gliding Schedule** – Is a work schedule that allows an employee to vary their arrival and departure time from one work day to the next. The employee must be on an 8 hour day 5 days a week to glide more than ½ hour. Employees cannot combine Maxiflex and Gliding schedules.
- **Compressed Work Schedules** are fixed work schedules that do not allow for the arrival and departure time to vary but still enable the employee to fulfill their basic work requirement in less than 10 days. Review 2051-F, 2051.253 (b) for more information on CWS schedule. There is no gliding in a CWS, if you arrive late for work, you must take leave; nor, can you start early in order to leave early.

Credit Hours are worked on a voluntary basis. A request must be submitted to your supervisor prior to working credit hours. Staff where their Time & Attendance (T&A) approver is different than their supervisor must obtain approval for the credit hours (utilizing Attachment A) prior to working them. The approval shall be submitted along with the Premium Pay request to the T&A/Leave approver. Please review RD Instruction 2051-F, 2051.255 for information on earning and using credit hours. Employees may not earn credit hours while teleworking. Some important credit hour facts include:

- No more than 24 credit hours can be carried from pay period to pay period.
- Credit hours are earned in increments of 15 minutes.
- No credit hours before 6 AM and only to attend night meetings (meeting time only) after 6 PM.
- No limit to the number of hours earned in a day as long as the total day does not exceed 12 hours.
- Employees on CWS may not earn credit hours.

The following guidelines apply to all work schedules:

- The lunch band is between the hours of 11 AM to 2 PM and cannot be changed. Lunch may begin no earlier than 11 AM and must be concluded by 2 PM. There are no exceptions.
- RD Instructions 2051.253 (1) (viii) and 2051.253 (b) (6) provides instruction on the correct way to determine an “in lieu of” holiday if a federal holiday falls on an employee’s FWS or CWS non workday. Basically, when a full-time employee’s non-work day falls on a holiday, they receive the “in lieu of” holiday on the preceding workday. It is not appropriate to select any other day in the pay period for the non-work day. There are no exceptions.
- GS-13, Program Directors and other GS-13 staff are not authorized a basic work schedule that begins prior to 7 AM and concludes before 4 PM. All current GS-13 work schedules will be reviewed and if necessary, changes will be made no later than PP 6 which begins on March 23, 2014. GS-12 Team Leaders and Specialists will review their current schedules and discuss them with their supervisors to determine if their current schedule best meets the need of the agency for office coverage, providing prompt assistance to internal and external customers, while still providing some flexibility to meet the employee’s personal needs.
- Team Leaders and GS-12 Specialists will only be authorized a basic work schedule that begins after 7 AM and concludes at 4 PM or after. Team Leaders and GS-12 Specialists whose current work schedule begins prior to 7 AM and/or concludes prior to 4 PM will be honored until changed by the employee. Future Team Leaders and GS-12 Specialists will not be authorized core work schedules that begin prior to 7 AM or conclude before 4 PM.

Finally, all employees will have their WEB T&A leave requests approved prior to taking scheduled leave or within 24 hours of returning from unscheduled leave. All employees will have their T&A's completed and validated no later than close of business (4:30 PM) each Monday following the end of a pay period. T&A supervisors may change this requirement based upon the needs of their schedule or the office.

Please contact Nicole Tennis, Human Resources Specialist, at (717) 237-2263 if you have any questions concerning this Administrative Notice.

/s/ Thomas P. Williams

THOMAS P. WILLIAMS
State Director

Attachment

REQUEST TO EARN CREDIT HOURS

Maximum 24 Hours Balance

Minimum 1/4 Hour; Maximum 2 Hours per Day

Requestor's Signature and Date:**Current Balance:**

	DATE	TIME	TOTAL	COMMENTS
MONDAY		From To		
TUESDAY		From To		
WEDNESDAY		From To		
THURSDAY		From To		
FRIDAY		From To		
SATURDAY		From To		
SUNDAY		From To		

APPROVAL:
☐ Request Approved for Credit Hours

☐ Above Request Disapproved for Credit Hours

☐ Above Request Approved in Part As Noted:
REMARKS:**APPROVAL (Signature)****DATE:**

If approved in whole or in part, please provide a copy to the employee and a copy to the timekeeper.
If disapproved, please return entire form to employee.